



June 4, 2007

Commission's Secretary  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554  
Subject: Designation of 2-1-1 and 5-1-1 as abbreviated dialing codes  
CC Docket NO. 92- 105

United Way of North Carolina (UWNC) hereby submits its Reply Comments to Public Notice DA 07-2017, released May 7, 2007. The Public Notice requested comments on the status of implementation of the 211 and 511 Dialing Codes. Further, the Public Notice requested comments on actions the Commission should take if these Dialing Codes are not widely used. United Way of North Carolina is limiting its comments to the status of 2-1-1 service in North Carolina.

United Way of North Carolina, a local independent non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization founded in 1953, serves 62 local United Ways across the state. In 1999, United Way of North Carolina began exploring the possibilities of a 2-1-1 system. A 2-1-1 task force submitted an application to the North Carolina Public Utilities Commission for designation of the three-digit number to be used for health and human service information, referral, and volunteer opportunities. The Commission designated United Way of North Carolina as the "holder" of the 2-1-1 number on November 18, 1999. Following designation of the number, UWNC worked to launch four pilot 2-1-1 call centers. In August 2005, UWNC consolidated two of the pilot sites into one call center and began aggressively increasing access to 2-1-1. Currently, 2-1-1 serves 60% of North Carolinians, or 5.1 million people, with service available in 27 counties.

The database of service providers used for making referrals for the three centers in North Carolina has 14,700 + listings. In 2006, our 2-1-1 call centers received more than 110,000 calls.

Housing assistance is consistently the greatest need and most common reason individuals contact 2-1-1. Other basic needs requests trail closely behind requests for housing assistance.

United Way of  
North Carolina



In North Carolina, the 2-1-1 system has served as a critical part of our disaster response infrastructure. In 2004, following hurricanes Frances, Ivan and six other tropical storms in as many weeks, western North Carolina suffered devastating flooding. The 2004 floods taxed everyone's capabilities, but the 2-1-1 system located at the United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County responded to the 60% increase in call volume and



helped connect a community in need of a life preserver to help. Following the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the 2-1-1 system in North Carolina once again stepped up to the challenge as refugees poured into the Charlotte Coliseum. In the first month alone, 10,000 new calls for help were managed by the 2-1-1 call center located at the United Way of Central Carolinas. The other call centers in the state also experienced an increase in call volume during the same period. Now, UWNC is focused on spreading coverage across our coastal communities, particularly as meteorologists predict a one-in-five chance of a hurricane making landfall in North Carolina this season.

As 2-1-1 has evolved in North Carolina, we have worked closely with many diverse partners to broaden the reach and scope of the service. Local and county governments play a key role in funding the 2-1-1 system in North Carolina. In addition, The American Social Health Association has come along side to serve as a consolidated call center location for North Carolina. This partnership has sped the expansion of 2-1-1 into many of our smaller, more rural counties. During the limited time of the partnership, ten new counties added 2-1-1 access. Lastly, 2-1-1 has worked closely with the business and the nonprofit community to increase use among select populations. Most recently, Triangle United Way, in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline and Durham Resources for Seniors, created a campaign aimed at reaching senior citizens and connecting them to the help they need through use of the 2-1-1 system.

United Way of North Carolina respectfully requests that the Commission find the public is well-served by the use of 2-1-1, that the Commission continue to support the 2-1-1 Dialing Code for this purpose, and that the Commission use its authority to facilitate more widespread use of the service.

Sincerely,

James Morrison  
President, United Way of North Carolina